

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION
GIRLS REHABILITATION FACILITY
INSPECTION REPORT
2005**

Facility Name: GIRLS REHAB. FACILITY **Inspection Date:** 6/23/2005
Superintendent: Yvette Klepin **Last Inspection Date:** 1/21/2004
Address: 2861 Meadow Lark Road **Telephone Number:** (858) 694-4510
San Diego, CA 92123 **Fax:** 514-8488

Type of Facility: Juvenile Hall **Presiding Juvenile Court Judge:**
Honorable Susan Huguenor

Staff Interviewed: Yvette Klepin, Probation Director
Cathy Olow, Supervising Prob. Officer **Commission Inspection Team:**
Christine Giordano

Juvenile Justice Commission Chair: Christine Giordano

Comments and Recommendations:

The Girl's Rehabilitation Facility (GRF) is an intensive, highly structured program serving female wards ages 11-18. The programs offered are designed to meet each girl's personal, emotional and educational needs. No major concerns were identified during this inspection visit. Staff is observed to be enthusiastic and dedicated to the best interests of the wards. They have been creative in developing resources from the community to make the most of the wards' time at GRF as described throughout this report. The facility has been well maintained with the addition of a new wing and ongoing renovation of the older portion of the facility.

This Commissioner has but one recommendation: that the team develops additional resources in career opportunities and employment readiness.

AREA REVIEWED:

R= Reviewed NR=Not Reviewed I= Interviewed NI – Not Interviewed

QUALITY OF LIFE

Physical Plant - R
Meals/Nutrition - R
Mental Health - R
Physical/Dental Health - R
Religious Services - R
Volunteer Involvement - R
Visiting - R
Other - NR

PROGRAMS

Education - R
Vocation/Employability - R
Community Services – NR
Victim/Gang Awareness - R
Substance Abuse - R
Other - NR

PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Minors - NI
Superintendent - I
Medical/Pshyche. Staff - NI
School Staff - NI
Supervisor - I
Supervisor Staff (Counselors) - NI
Food Services Staff - NI
Other – NR

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SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION INDICATE:

Number of Suicides: 0

Number of Attempted Suicides: 0

Number of Deaths from other causes: 0

Number of Escapes: 5

Local Inspections: Medical/Mental Health: February 23, 2005
Nutritional Health: February 23, 2005
Environmental Health: March 23, 2005
Fire Inspection: May 15, 2005

GENERAL INFORMATION

Has the facility exceeded capacity since the last inspection?

No. There were 44 wards on the date of inspection.

Does the facility house minors under Section 601 Welfare & Institutions Code?

No. Only 602s are housed at GRF.

STAFFING

Staff to Child Ratio:

Staff to child ratio is compliant with existing standards – 1:15 awake and 1:30 asleep.

Communication In Language Minor can Understand?

The primary language other than English spoken by the wards is Spanish. Some of the Correctional Officers are bilingual, English/Spanish. Additionally, the facility subscribes to Interpretalk, a telephone translation service which can provide telephone translation in a wide variety of languages within 30 minutes.

Diversity of Staff:

Staff at GRF represents diverse ethnicities and cultures, including Caucasian, African-American, Hispanic, and Asian. Because GRF houses only female wards, all of the correctional staff there are female.

Staff/Minor Interactions:

Good communication skills are vital to a correctional officer at GRF. Respectful interaction between staff and wards is expected of both groups. Correctional officers are assigned a small caseload; each CO meets weekly with assigned wards. Each ward is working her program of 10-12 weeks; these weekly sessions are critical toward motivating the girls to successfully complete their program. The majority of the girls are learning to integrate traumatic life events and direct their efforts in productive coping without the behaviors that led to their placement at GRF.

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Staff Interviews – Comments:

The staff at GRF works hard on their programming and their pride is evident during staff interview. The staff is strongly committed to helping the wards turn their life around. They recognize the stay at GRF is a crossroads and an opportunity; they use all their skills and training to effect positive change in the wards under their care. The level of enthusiasm, creativity and dedication displayed during the staff interview was nothing short of inspiring to this Commissioner.

CONDITIONS OF GROUNDS

Lawns, Playing fields, Blacktop, Asphalt and Other:

The outdoor grounds areas were recently renovated and are in excellent repair.

EXTERIOR OF BUILDINGS

General condition, paint, roof, drains/gutters and etc.:

The general condition of the building exterior is excellent. Constant attention is paid to appearance, both inside and out.

INTERIOR OF BUILDINGS

Walls, paint, floors, drains, plumbing fixtures, air vents, windows, etc.:

One portion of the building is relatively new and freshly painted in attractive and soothing colors. The older portion of the building is more institutional in appearance, but still clean and well maintained. The day room and outdoor areas were recently renovated as well. There were no obvious maintenance needs.

Are cleaning fluids and chemicals labeled and safely stored?

All cleaning fluids and chemicals were stored in locked areas and away from the wards.

Weapons Locker Location:

No weapons are allowed in this facility.

Recreation/Sports Equipment:

The outdoor areas have been newly renovated. Basketball hoops and a playing field were visible during the tour. The wards at GRF share the quad space with Juvenile Hall and have access at different times than the wards at Juvenile Hall. Girls who are interested can participate in the running program. Further inspection of the equipment was not conducted.

Are the hallways clear and doors propped open?

The hallways are clear and the doors are not propped open.

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Court Holding Area:

Not applicable to GRF.

Sleeping rooms/dormitories:

Sleeping rooms are in two areas: the new wing and the older portion. A new wing was added to GRF in 2003 with a capacity of 20 beds including larger dormitory type rooms and smaller rooms. This new wing has a decidedly feminine feel and décor with soft colors. The sleeping rooms in the older portion of the facility, with a capacity of 30 beds, were refurbished in March, 2005. Walls are thicker and a solid ceiling replaces the tiles eliminating this potential hiding place for contraband.

Beds:

Beds in the older wing are more institutional/metal and are a minimum of 12 inches from the floor with a thin vinyl-coated mattress. Beds in the new wing are either bunk or single-style and at least 12 inches from the floor.

Art, books, personal possessions allowed in sleeping rooms?

Some personal possessions are allowed in the sleeping room, such as books and writing materials. Other, more decorative and personal possessions are permitted based on privileges earned. This is well documented in the GRF Rule Book. Parents are permitted to bring the girls their personal hygiene items on Thursday and Sunday after they pass on to the Journey phase of their Passport to Life Program. These items are checked, approved and listed on each girl's property list.

Graffiti Present?

No graffiti was observed during this Commissioner's visit.

Ample blankets?

Each girl is issued two blankets upon admission. A ward may ask for an additional blanket if needed.

Study Area:

Girls generally study in their room. There is a large, well-lit day room at the end of the hallway in the older part of the facility. There is a second day room adjacent to the sleeping rooms in the new wing. Both are spacious, comfortable and well lit.

Adequate Lighting?

The older part of the facility is generally darker than the new wing which has more daylight. However, both portions are well lit.

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Temperature:

The temperature was comfortable on the day of this Commissioner's inspection. Temperature is controlled as needed based on the weather. Adequate heating and air conditioning is provided when indicated.

ORIENTATION OF MINORS

Are minors oriented to rules and procedures?

Minors are well oriented to the rules and procedures at GRF. Upon admission, each ward receives a written copy of "Girls Rehabilitation Facility Rule Book." They are also provided with a copy of "Passport to Life Program Phase Outline". Correctional Staff individually orients each ward to the rules. Parents are also oriented to rules and expectations.

Are rules and grievance procedures posted?

As stated previously, minors are provided with a written copy of the rules. The grievance procedure at GRF is the same as at the Kearny Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility (KMJDF); grievance procedures are not posted but are well defined. Wards sign the form at each step of the grievance procedure and are given a copy of the entire form when the grievance is resolved. Attempts are made to resolve the grievance at the lowest possible level. Additionally, third-year law students from California Western School of Law conduct a one-hour session on a weekly basis. The mediators train the staff as well as the wards on a new approach to reducing conflict and mediate day-to-day conflicts among the wards (source: GRF Program Fact Sheet).

Are rules and grievance procedures understood by minors?

All of the wards at GRF have spent time in Juvenile Hall first. When admitted to the Hall, the grievance procedures are clearly defined in the rule book they are given there; they learn the procedure for grievances while at the Hall, and the same procedures are used at GRF. It is the impression of this Commissioner that the wards are well informed and understand the rules and grievance procedures.

Minors Interviewed – Comments

No minors were interviewed during this inspection visit.

MEALS/NUTRITION

Kitchen – Clean; are knives and chemicals locked?

The meals are obtained from KMJDF which is adjacent to GRF and connected to it. The kitchen was viewed as part of the KMJDF inspection and this Commissioner spoke with the kitchen manager. The kitchen was very clean; knives are kept locked and are used by the kitchen staff only.

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Have the youths working in the kitchen been trained?

Wards at GRF do not work in the kitchen; wards housed at KMJDF earn the privilege of working in the kitchen. They are oriented and trained by kitchen staff, and are required to watch a training video. Wards at GRF are assigned jobs at breakfast, lunch and dinner. They are oriented and trained in how to complete their job properly and their job is checked by staff when they are finished.

Are meals served or cafeteria style?

Food is prepared at the Sheriff Department's central kitchen and transported to KMJDF and then to GRF which adjoins KMJDF. Meals are served on prepared trays. Food and drink are allowed only in the kitchen and dining area and special permission must be obtained from staff for other locations.

Are minors permitted to converse during meals?

Minors sitting at the same table are permitted to converse with each other during meals, unless otherwise specified. Wards are not permitted to talk between tables. They are expected to sit in assigned seats and are not permitted to change seating arrangements without permission from staff.

Is Staff present and supervising?

Staff is present and supervises all meals, including the preparation of the room and the distribution of the meals.

Is weekly menu prepared? Is it posted?

Weekly menus are prepared and posted at GRF. If a ward requires a special diet secondary to a chronic disease such as diabetes, this is ordered through the medical clinic and the food is then prepared according to specifications in the kitchen.

Are servings ample, nutritious and appetizing?

A meal was not being served at the time of this Commissioner's inspection at GRF. However, a meal was observed at KMJDF inspection which was completed on the same day. Since the meals come from the same kitchen, the observed meal appeared appetizing, well balanced and with generous portions.

Are weaker youths protected from having food taken from them?

Meals are well supervised. If bullying is noticed, appropriate disciplinary action is immediately taken.

Length of time allowed for eating?

At least 30 minutes is allowed for meals.

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PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF MINORS

Appearance?

Minors were well groomed. They are outfitted in plain pants and T shirts. GRF-issued clothing, night gowns, robes and shoes are the only clothing the minors are permitted to wear. Minors with special needs (e.g. pregnant minors) wear vests to indicate certain restrictions.

Showers – Frequency? Privacy maintained? Supervised by Staff? Any assaults in showers?

All wards must shower a minimum of five minutes every day. Showers are constantly supervised by staff; some privacy is maintained with doors covering approximately shoulders to knees depending on the height of the minor. No assaults were discussed during the visit other than to state the safety precautions in place to prevent assault or inappropriate sexual activity among wards.

Condition of clothing – Does clothing fit? Is it appropriate to weather?

Clothing is loose fitting and appropriate to weather. Clothing was noted to be clean and well maintained. All of the clothing, including underwear, shoes, robes and night clothing is provided by GRF. Wards are not permitted to wear personal clothing.

PROGRAMS

Recreation – type and amount each day:

Recreation time is provided in compliance with Title XV requirements. Generally, three hours daily and five hours on weekends are allotted for recreation. A broad spectrum of activities is scheduled; wards have access based on their phase in the program and the privileges they have earned. These activities include movie night, beauty night, staff excursions, four- and eight-hour passes with families, special outings etc.

Exercise – Daily schedule and amount of time each day:

Wards are expected to participate in some physical activity daily. They have one hour of large muscle exercise. GRF has formed a running team with participation from 5-10 girls. This is a voluntary program. The team participates in a 5k/10k run/walk on a monthly basis. Each girl receives a certificate of achievement each time they complete a run. GRF staff supervises this program in which the girls prepare for the monthly run throughout the month.

Access to Religious Services?

Wards that choose to participate have access to religious services. Catholic and Christian services are provided once weekly. Additionally, the Chaplain will arrange for a visit from a minister of any denomination requested by a ward.

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Medical/Mental health Services:

Wards at GRF have access to all medical and mental health services provided at KMJDF. This program is exemplary. Medical services are contracted with and provided by California Forensic Medical Group (CFMG). CFMG continues to contract with Children's Specialist of San Diego (CSSD) out of Children's Hospital for pediatric services provided to wards age 15 or less. Wards older than 15 receive medical services through Sharp Hospital. Daytime staffing includes 1 physician, 1 Physician's Assistant, 3 LVNs and 1 RN. Night staffing includes 1 RN and 2.5 LVNs. The local nursing shortage continues to require some shifts to be filled through contract nursing. Mental health care is provided through County Mental Health; there is a strong working relationship between medical and mental health services characterized by consistent joint meetings at which complex cases are discussed.

Volunteer Program:

GRF highly values the contribution of volunteers to staff many of the enrichment opportunities at GRF. At the time of this inspection visit, programs offered by volunteers included such things as the Book Club, Literacy 1:1, Tutors, Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) groups, Prostitution Group, and Life Skills training.

Counseling and Casework:

Each ward is assigned an "inside PO," who is a Correctional Officer, and a team to support the ward in successful completion of her program. All wards in the GRF full program are assigned to an individual counselor, either through Probation Forensics or through Spectrum. The girls are routinely seen about once a week, sometimes less, sometimes more as needed. Whenever a ward has an emotional crisis or has a problem requiring immediate intervention, the therapist is contacted and asked to see the ward as soon as possible. Those wards that are prescribed psychotropic medication are seen regularly by qualified mental health staff.

Family Reunification Planning:

Family counseling is conducted once per week (both English and Spanish groups) and is facilitated by GRF staff and by Spectrum. The goal of the group is to create a supportive environment to share and learn positive parenting skills. The group also opens communication between parents and wards to prepare the way for wards to return home. Additionally, for those wards who are pregnant or are parents, a mother/child bonding group facilitated by GRF staff is held twice a month. This program utilizes handouts, videos, guest speakers and written exercise techniques to educate mothers in child development, safety and parenting skills.

Substance Abuse Counseling:

Substance abuse education and counseling is part of the program on all units. The Spectrum Program facilitates a weekly Chemical Dependency class and an Alcohol and Drug Specialist facilitates a recovery process Alcohol and Drug Counseling group. Additionally, Spectrum provides drug counseling, and volunteers from Narcotics Anonymous and Alcohol Anonymous hold meetings in the units. Spectrum also provides an Aftercare Program designed as a support system after release; this program provides education in life skills such as staying sober, avoiding peer pressure, etc. for successful maintenance in the community.

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Victim Awareness Classes:

Victim awareness education is incorporated into many of the programs. One example is the "VOICES" curriculum of "Self Discovery and Empowerment for Girls" facilitated by instructors from the Freedom from Exploitation Program. Discussion includes the issue of prostitution and how it is not a victimless crime. Other examples include "Thinking for a Change" and "Criminal Conduct Substance Abuse Treatment" programs, both of which strive to make the wards aware of their own thoughts and feelings that lead to high-risk or criminal behaviors so they can make a good decision to change.

Gang Awareness Classes:

Spectrum presents group counseling on gang diversion and prevention. As part of the program, the ward explores alternatives to a gang lifestyle and confronts issues of personal responsibility.

Sexual Harassment Classes:

Wards are provided with education about sexual harassment and are fully aware there is zero tolerance for this behavior at GRF. Each day the correctional officer reads a statement defining sexual harassment and explaining what to do if a ward believes they are being sexually harassed. These allegations are taken very seriously.

Parenting Classes:

Two parenting classes are offered to wards: "Parenting Young Children" group is facilitated by Jewish Family Services and is designed for wards that are pregnant, have children, or are at risk of having children. Two small groups meet for seven weeks and focus on systematic training for effective parenting, including child development, building self-esteem in children, positive behavior goals, discipline, etc. The Spectrum program presents parent education classes once per week. This program aims to teach and demonstrate the essence of a healthy family and includes the basic skills of parenting and the responsibilities of parenthood.

Vocational Classes:

This area is covered primarily through the school which brings volunteers in from the community to discuss different career opportunities.

Work Program:

At the time of the inspection visit, there were plans to initiate a work program in July, 2005. This program is to include formalized work crews; however, if this program loses funding, it will not continue.

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DISCIPLINE OF MINORS

Frequency and type:

There is a structured system for discipline; consequences of negative behavior are clearly outlined in the GRF Rule Book and in the Passport to Life Phase outline. Wards are assigned essays called "thinking reports" when they break a rule. Rule breaking can also result in loss of status, regression to a lower program level, workouts, administrative removal to KMJDF and termination.

GRIEVANCES

Number and Type:

The Director reports at most, four to five grievances are received weekly. They mostly relate to the ward feeling she was unfairly treated by the CO when disciplined, or that the CO didn't listen to her explanation. Most of the grievances are resolved by improving communication.

TELEPHONE

Access:

Wards are permitted access to a telephone to make collect calls to their family every night and/or as court ordered. Phone calls are considered a privilege and this privilege can be temporarily withheld for disciplinary reasons.

CORRESPONDENCE

Is Postage Free? Is incoming and/or outgoing mail read? Is there confidential correspondence?

Postage is free to wards sending outgoing mail. Incoming and outgoing mail to and from wards is not read. Mail may be "scanned/shaken out" for contraband according to policy. Correspondence is confidential.

VISITING

Is there adequate space, convenient times or accommodations to parent work schedule, etc. special visits? Does staff supervise visits? Is there adequate privacy?

Adequate space is provided for families to visit twice per week, on Sunday mornings and Thursday evenings. Variety in times is provided to accommodate parental work schedule. Visits take place in spacious day rooms. Special visits also take place at GRF; parents are encouraged to bring siblings and grandparents. These visits last one hour, and outside packaged food such as fast food is allowed. GRF staff supervises all visits except Family Counseling sessions. The space provided for visiting is large enough to allow for family privacy. Families can easily spread out so no other family is in close proximity and can overhear their interactions. Staff does supervise these visits.

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Have all minors had visits?

All minors are provided the opportunity for visitation and have visits unless they have no family or the family chooses not to come.

SCHOOL

Teachers – Number of full-time; frequency of substitutions:

The school program is year round and staffed with 20 full-time contracted teachers in conjunction with the school program at KMJDF. Because of the year-round schedule, substitute teachers are on site most days to cover for full-time staff vacations and sick leave. The school year is 185 days.

Number of minors attending school:

School is required and mandatory for all wards at GRF. When at capacity, 50 wards will be in school.

Number of minors in each classroom:

The school program is operated jointly with KMJDF. There are 15 classrooms in all with a maximum of 20 students in each room.

Number of minors on independent study:

At the time of the visit, there were no minors on independent study. The school program has the capacity to place a minor on independent study if needed.

Atmosphere of classroom:

This Commissioner did not observe a classroom during this inspection visit. The Director informed the Commissioner that classrooms are orderly and well controlled. Wards generally apply themselves to the educational program as student-to-teacher ratio is enhanced in this educational setting. Classrooms are well supervised with support of correctional officers readily available, and discipline problems are rare.

Adequate Supplies? Books, paper, computers, etc.

Supplies and books are very adequate. Teachers order whatever they need through the District and orders are generally filled within one to two weeks. Computers on Wheels (COWs) are used throughout the classrooms.

Activities and coursework:

Coursework is grade appropriate and individualized according to the needs of the students whose educational needs are individually assessed. The education program is standards based ("power standards") and the teachers teach to the required standards. The school uses the Holt series for Language Arts and Prentiss Hall for Math. A variety of Social Science texts are used. School is from 0800—1400, Monday through Friday, with lunch from 1100-1200 and one hour of physical education daily. Each 20 days of attendance equals one credit.

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Are minors required to do homework?

Wards at GRF may be required to do homework. Homework is completed in their rooms.

Number of minors not attending. Reason:

There were no minors who were not attending school. School is a requirement to participate in the program at GRF.

Relationship between the school and GRF staff.

The relationship between staff at GRF and school staff is considered excellent. Leadership is supportive of the collaborative effort between school and GRF staff, and school staff participates in unit meetings at GRF. Both groups have worked hard at developing good communication and rapport. School staff consistently acknowledges school accomplishment which contributes to overall goals of GRF programming. The school sponsors a monthly Honor Roll, and currently they have approximately two students per month who pass their GED.

MEDICAL/MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

There is ready access to both medical and mental health services. There are boxes throughout the living areas for wards to fill out a sick leave request. These are collected by nursing staff every four hours and are triaged for medical staff, i.e. nurse visit, physician assistant visit or MD visit. The medical team works closely with Public Health regarding public health issues such as STDs and positive PPDs. Wards are referred for mental health services in a variety of ways, including self referrals, referrals from probation officers, correctional officers, parents, medical team, etc. The mental health team provides crisis intervention and stabilization, which may require ongoing care during time at Juvenile Hall. The mental health team is also available during visiting hours to allow for interaction with families of the wards. Approximately 50% of the wards take prescribed psychotropic medication which is monitored by the psychiatrist and administered by registered nurses. Additionally, Health Educators work with the wards and their families when this will benefit the ward. The Linda Vista Health and Community Service Center provides a monthly program to discuss various physical and mental health issues that effect young women in today's society. The Teen Clinic Family Health Center provides an eight-week program discussing such topics as female anatomy and physiology, birth control, STDs, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse and depression/suicide.

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